the responsibility of promoting development and export of cardamom and export development of other spices. The Board is implementing a number of schemes aiming at export development of spices such as quality evaluation/ upgradation and promotion of value added spices. The Spices Board has at present four regional offices at Delhi, Bombay, Madras & Calcutta and 5 marketing offices at Tuticorin, Bodinayakannur, Saklespur, Unjha and Sikkim. These Offices are set up at the strategic centres mainly to assist the spice exporters in their effort to increase exports and to implement the export development programmes of the Board. Besides, the Board has main research station at Myladumtara and regional stations at Sikkim, Saklespur and Thadiyantudisai for research activities in respect of cardamom.

(c) The details of export of spices during the last year are given below :-

Year	Quantity (MT)	Value (Rs. crores)
1996-97	2,19,400	1180.00

Source : DGCI&S, Calcutta, Spices Board, Cochin.

(d) Apart from the general trade policy reforms, the steps taken to enhance export of spices are, abolition of cess on export of pepper (except green pepper in brine), cardamom, saffron and spice oils and oleoresins to enhance its price competitiveness in the overseas markets; implementation of brand promotion schemes like logo promotion; grant of spice house certificate as a recognition of processor/exporters of quality products; setting up of laboratories for testing of products; technology transfer; process upgradation and product development.

Bilateral Trade Talks with Russia

6638. SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY :
PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether India has urged Russia to speed up the process of auctioning rupee debt in order to improve bilateral trade;

(b) if so, whether Indian delegation accompanied by the former Prime Minister had made a number of agreements to improve the trade between the two countries;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the extent to which both the counties have agreed to improve the trade;

(e) the barriers that were coming in the way of improving the trade between the two countries;

(f) the action taken by the two countries to remove the barriers; and

(g) the extent to which the trade between the two countries is likely to be improved during 1997-98 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Government of India has impressed upon the Russian Federation for timely allocation of rupee funds to experienced Russian entities to improve Indo-Russian trade.

(b) and (c) Two important bilateral agreements having significant bearing on Indo-Russian trade were interalia signed in the areas of avoidance of Double Taxation and Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters. The details of the above agreements are as under :-

(I) AGREEMENT ON THE AVOIDANCE OF DOUBLE TAXATION

This Agreement seeks to avoid levying of identical or substantially similar taxes on income of individuals as well as corporate bodies in the two countries.

(ii) AGREEMENT ON COOPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN CUSTOMS MATTERS

This Agreement provides a framework for cooperation between the two countries in the prevention, investigation and prosecution of offences against their customs laws.

(d) The above agreements signed are expected to boost bilateral trade and promote mutual investments in both the countries, ensure accurate assessment of customs duties, taxes and other customs charges, discourage switch trade and ensure proper implementation of the provisions on prohibition, restriction and control over imports and exports.

(e) The barriers coming in the way of improving the trade between the two countries include lack of facilities in terms of financial infrastructure such as absence of Indian banks, time taken for opening of Letter of Credits (LCs), delay in allocation of rupee funds, lack of adequate and reliable warehousing facilities.

(f) and (g) The Government has initiated effective measures to overcome the barriers coming in the way of boosting Indo-Russian trade. These measures include encouraging consignment sales and opening of warehouses, broadbasing the basket of tradable goods, signing of Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs, impressing upon Russian Federation for early allocation of rupee funds, opening of Indian banks, participation in trade fairs and exhibitions, enhanving the trade in the area of pharmaceuticals, reduction of value addition norms from 100% to 75% in respect of certain hi-tech items including personal computers for export to Russia under the debt repayment route etc.

It is expected that the aforesaid measures would help in further improving Indo-Russian trade during 1997-98.

Export of Colour TVs

6639. SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether sale of colour TV sets is likely to expand at an average of 3.6 per cent annually to 137 million by 2001 AD and the Asian market will grow to 46 million units by the same period;

(b) if so, the details of India's export in terms of number of colour TVs to world market and Asian market, separately, during the last three years;

(c) whether the Government have made any plan to increase the export of colour TVs to capture a significant share of this booming world and Asian market; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) As per estimates made by the Electronics & Computer Software Export Promotion Council, the colour TV market will grow approximately by 2.5% annually and is likely to reach to 112 million by 2001. The demand in the Asian market is expected to grow to 44 million colour TV sets by the same period.

(b) The details of India's export in terms of number of colour TVs during the last three years is as under :-

Year	Total Exports	Export to Asia
1993-94	45000	12000
1994-95	85000	15500
1995-96	125000	24500

(Source : Electronics & Computer Software EPC)

(c) and (d) Colour TV sets is one of the major items of consumer electronics export basket from India. The various steps taken to boost the export of colour TV sets in order to capture a significant share of booming world and Asian market include participation in exclusive Indian shows/international exhibitions, sponsoring of industry delegations, etc.

Rubber Based Industries

6640. SHRI N. DENNIS :
SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under the consideration of the Union Government to set up a rubber factory in the country particularly in Tamil Nadu and Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) As per the present policy no permission or Industrial Licence is required to set up a rubber based industry. However, since August, 1991 to 31.03.1997, 380 Industrial Entrepreneur Memoranda have been filed and 13 Letters of Intent have been issued for setting up various rubber goods industries in India.

(b) Does not arise.

Funds for Weaving and Processing Industry

6641. SHRI NITISH KUMAR :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJARA :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the amount allocated for modernisation of techniques in weaving and processing sector of textiles industry during the Eighth Plan period and the amount actually spent; and

(b) the funds earmarked for the purpose for Ninth Plan ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) : (a) and (b) A proposal is under formulation to facilitate modernisation, through technological upgradation, of the textile industry. The intended objective is to improve production and productivity of the Indian textile industry to make it more competitive, including in the export market. Details of a Technology Upgradation fund for textiles and jute industries are being worked out. There was no such fund in the Eighth Plan.